

Message Text

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PAGE 01 THE HA 04507 121558Z

44

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4331

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 4507

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EEC

SUBJECT: GISCARD D'ESTAING'S SEPTEMBER 14 DINNER FOR
EC CHIEFS OF GOVERNMENT.

1. DURING MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 10 WITH DR. RINGNALDA,
SECRETARY GENERAL OF PRIME MINISTER DEN UYL'S MINISTRY
OF GENERAL AFFAIRS AND ONE OF DEN UYL'S TOP ADVISERS,
DCM ASKED ABOUT DUTCH PERSPECTIVE OF DINNER GET-
TOGETHER IN PARIS OF EC-9 CHIEFS OF GOVERNMENT.
RINGNALDA DID NOT HAVE MUCH TO OFFER BY WAY OF SU-
STANCE OTHER THAN THAT HIS BOSS WOULD BE GOING WITH A
WAIT-AND-SEE ATTITUDE. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE DUTCH
THOUGHT IT WAS A MISTAKE NOT TO INCLUDE EC OMMISSION
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PAGE 02 THE HA 04507 121558Z

PRESIDENT ORTOLI. REINGNALDA'S OWN VIEW WAS THAT IF THE

DINNER MEETING MADE A USEFUL CONTRIBUTION TO A COMMON APPROACH TO THE EC'S SERIOUS ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL PROBLEMS IT WOULD BE WORTH THE EFFORT.

2. RINGNALDA TOOK THE OCCASION TO DERIDE THE EFFORTS OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TO MINIMIZE THE SUBSTANTIVE SCOPE OF THE DINNER MEETING. HE REFERRED TO RECURRENT STATEMENTS AND EXPLANATIONS TO THE EFFECT THAT UNDER THE DUTCH CONSTITUTION FOREIGN AFFAIRS FELL SOLELY WITHIN THE COMPETENCE OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. ACCORDING TO RINGNALDA, THIS IS AN OVERSIMPLIFICATION. THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS CAN MANDATE ANY OTHER MINISTER, INCLUDING THE PRIME MINISTER, TO DISCHARGE A PARTICULAR RESPONSIBILITY IN THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS FIELD. RINGNALDA ANTICIPATED THAT THE REGULAR SEPTEMBER 13 COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING WOULD DISCUSS THE EC HEADS OF GOVERNMENT DINNER IN PARIS THE NEXT EVENING AND PROVIDE THE PRIME MINISTER WITH GUIDELINES FOR HIS PARTICIPATION. THIS WAS PERFECTLY CORRECT CONSTITUTIONALLY, RINGNALDA SAID, AND ALSO REFLECTED CURRENT REALITIES IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, WHERE SO MANY OF THE IMPORTANT ISSUES WERE CLOSELY TIED UP WITH THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION OR THE ECONOMIES OF THE COUNTRIES CONCERNED. RINGNALDA ALSO NOTED THAT THE TRADITIONAL MONOPOLY OF MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WAS A THING OF THE PAST; THAT FOR THE LAST 25 YEARS THE TREND HAD BEEN FOR SEVERAL OTHER MINISTRIES TO ASSUME AND EXERCISE AN IMPORTANT SHARE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY IN THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS FIELD. RESISTANCE TO THIS TREND WAS STILL PRESENT IN SOME QUARTERS OF THE DUTCH FOREIGN MINISTRY, HE SAID, BUT SOONER OR LATER THEY WOULD REALIZE THEY WERE FIGHTING A LOSING BATTLE.

3. COMMENT: RINGNALDA'S SHARP COMMENTS REINFORCE THE CONCLUSION WE REACHED SEVERAL MONTHS AGO THAT PRIME MINISTER DEN UYL INTENDS TO GRASP THE OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED HIM BY BOTH DOMESTIC AND EXTERNAL FACTORS TO BE HIS OWN MAN IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TO SPEAK FROM A POSITION OF LEADERSHIP IN INTERNATIONAL COUNCILS.

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PAGE 03 THE HA 04507 121558Z

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